

The **AUTHOR** **& JOURNALIST**

AUGUST

1925

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The Literary Market

*Authentic Information on the Manuscript
Requirements of the Publishers*

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THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST'S Literary Market Tips

Gathered Monthly from Authoritative
Sources

The American Mercury, 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, announces that with the August issue H. L. Mencken will assume the entire editorship of that magazine. George Jean Nathan, formerly joint editor with Mr. Mencken, will become a contributing editor. *The American Mercury* reports that during its eighteen months of existence it has put 337 contributions into type by 198 different authors. The contributors represent 38 American states, one American colony, and 15 foreign countries. It is emphatically stated that unsolicited manuscripts not accompanied by stamped and addressed envelopes will not be returned and the editors will not enter into correspondence about them.

Irmengarde Eberle, editor of *Excelsa*, 222 W. Thirty-ninth Street, New York, writes: "We find that most of the well-written stories that come into our office are inclined to be too slight in plot. We are looking particularly for the story with a dramatic plot that has good characterization. We like love and marriage problems stories, society, adventure, business and mystery stories, but they must be handled from the woman's angle. We use also special articles that are useful and interesting to the woman in the home, as well as an occasional striking feature story. We also use some short verse from eight to twelve lines in length."

Artists and Models Magazine, 109 W. Forty-ninth Street, New York, according to Merle Hersey, editor, "can use clean stories and clever sketches of studio life, humorous or otherwise, not over 2000 words in length." Mr. Hersey does not mention rates or methods of payment.

Burten's Follies, 109 W. Forty-ninth Street, New York, a monthly, "is in the market for jokes, especially negro dialect, skits, humorous verses, limericks, etc.," write the editors. "Very short stories of not over 500 words are used occasionally." Rates and methods of payment are not mentioned.

Blue Book Magazine, 36 S. State Street, Chicago, announces in the August issue a new editorial plan of publishing no more continued stories. Every issue will be complete, according to the announcement, "More and better stories—that's the editorial battle-cry." The new policy will include book-length novels.

True Western Stories, 79 Seventh Avenue, is a new magazine added to the Street & Smith group with the August number. It will feature illustrated articles and stories of the West, the stories written in fictional form and with fictitious names, but based on facts. It is understood that the usual Street & Smith rates, averaging in excess of 1 cent a word, payable on acceptance, will prevail.

Laughter, a monthly publication from the offices of the Guild Publishing Company, 586 Drexel Building, Philadelphia, will appear on or before September 1st. "This will give every writer of humor, from the two-line joke or four-line poem to the short-story of 1000 to 4000 words an excellent standard market for material," the editors write. "*Laughter* will also purchase suitable pictures of humorous nature." Rates and methods of payment are not stated.

Paris Nights, 534 Drexel Building, Philadelphia, uses short stories from 1000 to 3500 words with Parisian backgrounds, but American in plot and appeal; articles on the Latin Quarter, on studio life, on Parisian theatrical successes, etc., and brief verse and prose fillers of a similar nature, preferably humorous. The editor states: "It should be borne in mind that while *Paris Nights* is necessarily a "sex" magazine, it will give no space in its columns to offensive material. When you submit a quantity of material—paragraphs, fillers, jokes or verse—it is quite likely that we shall return to you without loss of time such of these as may appear at a glance unusable, and hold others for closer inspection. We do this to expedite things, for you and for ourselves. It does not necessarily imply acceptance." Rates are around ½ cent a word on acceptance.

The Highway Magazine, 215 N. Michigan Avenue, buys articles of from 800 to 1000 words, dealing with the construction and maintenance of roads and also with irrigation and drainage. Frank E. Kennedy, editor, writes: "We cannot use general material. Stories should deal with specific projects, telling exactly how a certain section of road was built; describing the organization, equipment, and methods employed in maintaining a certain road; and in the case of irrigation and drainage, articles should give construction details which would interest and prove helpful to those actually engaged in that kind of work. For this reason, unless the writer, himself, is a competent engineer, the material should be obtained from the engineer in charge of the work described. If anyone in a position to secure material of this kind will communicate with us, giving a brief outline of what he has to offer, we shall be glad to explain our needs more in detail and help him in every way possible. Our rate is from 1 to 2 cents a word according to the nature of the material, the source, etc."

A contributor who has sold many thousand words to *Boy Life*, Box 5, Station N, Cincinnati, states that its customary rate is 1/3 cent a word, on acceptance.

The Lariat Story Magazine, 461 Eighth Avenue, New York, has taken the place of *True Adventures*.

Movie Magazine, 1926 Broadway, New York, is a new publication to be issued monthly by the Macfadden Publications beginning with a September issue. It will contain fiction, interviews, news and household departments. Its rates are reported to be 2 cents a word on publication.

Ziffs, 550 Transportation Building, Chicago, J. S. Hart, editor, announces: "We are enlarging our capacity for jokes, epigrams, short verse and longer humorous articles, and are signing almost everything that we run in the book, either with initials or full names, according to the length of the article. Our prices during the summer until further announcement are: Short jokes, \$1; long jokes, 1 cent a word; verse, 25 cents a line; epigrams, \$1; ideas for covers, \$2.50; ideas for new features, \$25."

Everybody's Magazine, Spring and Macdougall Streets, New York, is using personality sketches of about 1000 words with one photo. Its rate averages 3 cents a word on acceptance with an allowance of \$5 for each photograph.

Vacation Magazine, Orchard Island, Ohio, A. R. Tarr, editor, has an unique method of reporting upon submitted manuscripts. In the case of one contributor, it accepted manuscripts, saying nothing about rates or time of payment, and asked that the contributor furnish information as to all summer resorts and attractions in his vicinity, sending a "questionnaire" for the purpose. The contributor sent the desired information. Then he received a letter asking that he act as advertising solicitor, and get the advertisements from all the resorts within a radius of seventy-five miles, with which to "finance a special edition," or special department (not clear which) for the magazine, offering a commission and intimating that the magazine would be "able to use all the material the contributor sent in after that." The contributor turned the matter over to another party. *Vacation Magazine* at once returned the "accepted" material with a curt note that it was "overstocked."

The New Yorker, 25 W. Forty-fifth Street, New York, in an announcement to contributors, states: "We have been running, on the ad pages, notes from various places—Washington, Indianapolis, Nassau, etc. We want to build up this feature and want notes from various sections of the country, from other cities, from anywhere. The idea can be got from those printed. We shall continue to run a 'profile' each week, a personality story designed to characterize truthfully the subject. Suggestions will be eagerly considered. We want anecdotal material for the 'Talk of the Town' department. We have in mind a department of bunk, blah, etc., interesting newspaper headlines, superunconscious press agent announcements and typographical errors." *The New Yorker* pays good rates on acceptance.

The Board of Publication of the United Lutheran Church of America, 1228-1234 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, does not purchase poetry for any of its publications, according to an authoritative statement. Its rates for other manuscript vary according to the type of material.

(Continued on Page 26)

Prize Contests

Blue Book Magazine, 36 S. State Street, Chicago, announces that monthly, until further notice, five checks of \$100 each will be sent to the writers who submit the best "actual fact" stories in the realms of (1) adventure, (2) mystery, (3) business, (4) sport, and (5) humor. Literary experience is unnecessary, the editors state. "Send stories to the True Experience Editor and all necessary editing to make your story smoothly readable will be by done by him and his associates. It is the experience itself that counts more than the way it is written." No length limitations are specified, but it is suggested that experiences be related in not more than 2000 words. Unacceptable manuscripts accompanied by stamped envelope or loose stamps will be returned.

Ziffs, 608 S. Dearborn Street, Chicago, offers prizes of \$50, \$25, \$10, and subscriptions, for the best letters telling the editor why he should or should not continue to publish cross-word puzzles. A coupon clipped from the magazine must accompany entries. Closing date, August 25.

The News, 25 Park Place, New York City, is paying \$20 daily for two real-experience letters about prohibition, one letter telling of an incident favorable to prohibition and one letter telling of an unpleasant experience due to prohibition, for each of \$10 is paid. Letters are limited to 200 words. Address Prohibition Editor.

John Curtis Underwood, Santa Fe, Calif., it is reported, offers for "the best fifty lines or less of unpublished free verse, one poem or more, a first prize of \$499, a second prize of \$299, and a third prize of \$202. The contest closes September 15, 1925."

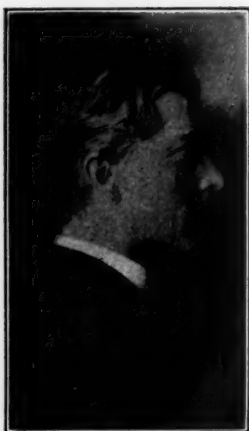
The Simonds Saw and Steel Company, 70 Main Street, Fitchburg, Mass., offers \$500 and other cash prizes for the best essays on the subject, "Your Prosperity and Mine." The contest closes December 31, 1925. Address Contest Editor.

House Beautiful, 8 Arlington Street, Boston 17, Mass., pays \$5 for articles from 300 to 450 words in length telling of your experiences, ways and means you have adapted to make your house more attractive or more convenient, and your gardens more beautiful or more prolific. Address, "How I Did It." The magazine also pays \$1 to \$3 for letters which contain definite information about ingenious devices or helpful discoveries about the house, its planning, its equipment, its running, or its grounds and gardens. Address The Curiosity Box.

Ziffs, 550 Transportation Building, Chicago, announces a contest to find "the world's best simile." Examples given are: "Scarce as chorus girls in Zion City," "She had on a hat that looked like a firecracker exploding in a fruit cart," "As full of pep as a wet pancake." Prizes: For the best simile, \$25; for the next five best, \$5 each; for the next ten, \$2.50 each; for the next fifteen, prizes of a year's subscription. Contest closes October 15. Contestants may send in as many answers as they wish to, but all must be on post cards.

An Exercise in Words

By Chauncey Thomas



CHAUNCEY THOMAS

TAKE the simplest sentence, or one crisp thought, sound it in a hundred different ways. It is practice, like touching the twice four notes into a symphony or the bugle-call.

Two plus two equals four. One plus one doubled makes four. When two mates two, four is born. Twin twos are four. Twice twice is four. Double, double, that is four. Two paired means four. Two is four split. Two is four divided against itself, which is zero, and the Roman secret of government. Two plus two equals four when the time of counting is less than the time of change, and the universe is in continuous and constant change, therefore that two plus two equals four is only a matter of faith. That two plus two equals four assumes that the first exists when the last is counted, and that is equally true of one plus one.

Play with, fondle words, toss and juggle them, then when you would shape or shade a thought; you have the tool with which to do it.

Write something with one hundred words of one syllable without stopping your pencil or typewriter.

Write the same thing in one hundred words of one syllable and use no word twice.

If the wording does not rightly clothe, confine or conceal the thought, there are easily several million ways to try it. Thus, the idea in the six-word sentence, "Tall red flowers filled the field," can be made rapidly into 285,600 sentences, each of six words, without changing the order of the words. "Flowers tall and red filled the field" increases the number to 571,200 variations, and "Flowers red and tall filled the field" gives over 1,000,000 combinations. A further change to "the field filled" makes it over 2,000,000 to choose from. Thus one can easily and rapidly have a million or two possible sentences a minute at his command when writing to express one thought, and do it mentally.

EXAMPLE

1 Tall	1 red	1 flowers	1 filled the	1 field
2 High	2 pink	2 blossoms	2 heaped	2 farm
3 Towering	3 scarlet	3 plants	3 piled	3 ranch
4 Upreaching	4 blood	4 weeds	4 flooded	4 garden
5 Rank	5 maroon	5 petals	5 carpeted	5 lot
	6 garnet	6 blooms	6 floored	6 range
	7 ruby	7 buds	7 painted	7 meadow
	8 ruddy	8 stalks	8 crowded	8 plot
	9 reddish	9 stems	9 jammed	9 acreage
	10 pinkish	10 leaves	10 packed	10 acres
	11 flaming	11 vines	11 blanketed	11 quarter
	12 glowing	12 shrubs	12 colored	12 pasture
	13 rusty	13 clusters	13 paved	13 plantation
	14 wine	14 clover	14 roofed	14 yard
		15 plumes	15 clothed	15 bed
			16 covered	16 patch
				17 swamp

The Space-Grabber

Some Examples of the Type With Which the Editors Are Familiar; Writers Who Injure Themselves Needlessly, Whether Through Covetousness, Carelessness or Ignorance

By A. H. Bittner

Associate Editor of The Frontier; Author of "What an Editor Wants"



A. H. BITTNER

"CUTTING" has come to be one of the chief editorial functions; pruning down, sweating out the excess fat, jettisoning the useless verbiage, digging the story out of a mass of smothering language. How often the editor decides, "This is a pretty good yarn—at six thousand words; but as it

stands it runs over ten thousand." Either he must reject a usable story, or he must pay for an overwritten tale—often pay for words which must be thrown away. Then comes the job of deleting, condensing and reconstructing which the writer should have done.

If the writer did his job properly it would never be necessary for an editor to cut a manuscript. No editor takes delight in ripping out words; editorial cutting has but one object—to present the story clearly, readably, entertainingly, as the writer should have presented it himself. This matter of overwriting is far more serious than the question of the money involved; overwriting hits two ways at once; at the editor's pocketbook and at his circulation. Overwritten stories are expensive in their initial cost and in the dissatisfaction they create among the magazine's readers. Is it any wonder that the space-grabber, the wordage hound, is the bane of the editorial office?

Overwriting has several causes, the most unpardonable of which is the commercial one, the desire to drag every possible dol-

lar out of a story idea. Unfortunately this practice is decidedly on the increase. The writer who is a "businessman" first and a creative artist second, sees his story idea only in dollars and cents. If it contains the material for a short-story, he can stretch it into a novelette; what would be excellent at six or seven thousand words, he drags out to fifteen thousand. In a novelette plot he sees not the fifteen or twenty thousand words it is worth, but thirty or forty thousand. Instead of visualizing the story for its story quality he visualizes it at two cents a word.

This regrettable practice is a real menace to the short-story; it is one of the factors which make good short-stories scarce. It is one of the reasons why editors are always wide open to the short-story while they regard the novelette with suspicion. All too often when a writer starts to develop a real mastery of the short-story, when his name begins to mean something to magazine readers and be worth something in the way of circulation to an editor, he is bitten by the inflation bug—and the only short-stories he submits thereafter are those with plots and themes that cannot be stretched by any possibility to novelette length—proper material for a tabloid story.

THE space-grabber is a specialist on long and wordy descriptions; his descriptive paragraphs run for pages and utilize every conceivable adjective and means of comparison. Redundancy is his middle name. He is past master at the dubious art of carting in "throw-back" scenes, episodes from the past of his characters, episodes which have no place in the story he is telling, but which serve nobly to swell the word total. He dotes on long-winded and meaningless conversation; he misses no opportunity to prolong a scene until the very last second—

or word—he specializes on the movie trick of taking each character individually through the same scene and over the same territory. Never does he miss an opportunity to drag in incidents, details, scenes, words—always words!—by the heels. A simple sentence is his idea of sacrilege.

And the result is a tiresome yarn, a long-winded drawn-out narrative that is obvious to even the least discerning of readers.

Indeed, space-grabbing is an outstanding exemplification of the old adage, "Penny wise, pound foolish." For the few cents more that he can wring from a story the space-grabber not only jeopardizes his future but actually loses dollars. He is decidedly unpopular; an editor will tolerate him only as long as necessary—and is never loath to be done with him when the occasion arises where he may do so without possible loss to his magazine. Instead of working amicably with an editor, the space-grabber gouges; and the editor's feeling for him is as warm as that of a borrower for a usurer. If the space-grabber had played the game squarely, in all probability he would be receiving a much better rate for his material—so this penny wisdom is costing him real dollars.

Every editor can detect the space-grabber without an effort, and, depend upon it, any increase in word-rate that writer gets he has to force. Conscientious work brings its own reward—monetary as well as artistic—in fiction as in any other line; for an editor appreciates the writer who writes a story for the story's sake, for what it is worth as an artistic product. Every editor wants to hold onto a writer of that sort; and he is willing to pay to do so.

ANOTHER type of the space-grabber for whom there is little more excuse is the lazy man—the fellow who simply will not take the trouble to go over his manuscript and give it the trimming it needs. The lazy writer produces a leisurely, discursive, wandering sort of story because that is the easiest to write; he does not have to concentrate, to weigh every word, to consider the value of every sentence and every scene. He is careless—and leaves it to someone else to remedy the verbosity which is the result of his laxity. Always he has a minimum of plot—for plot-building is hard work—and what plot he has is made to carry three and four times its proper amount of wordage.

To some writers the beginning of success is unfortunately the signal for a letdown; once they have established themselves, even insecurely, they no longer feel the necessity for the old painstaking care. Revision becomes a thing of the past. The first draft of the manuscript, which heretofore they never would have dreamed of sending out, now goes to the editor. Sloppy work! The first draft is usually full of grammatical blunders, poorly chosen words, crude expressions—and always overwritten. Of course such carelessness is inexcusable; it is a poor reflection on the "big name" or near big name who practices it.

There is never an excuse for careless, lazy writing. If a story is worth writing it is worth writing well. The carelessly written—or carelessly overwritten—story is only half finished. If that is the sort of manuscript you send out, there is the explanation for your rejections; there is the reason why you do not seem to be able to secure a better word-rate even after you have begun to sell fairly regularly. Do your own cutting—and watch the difference.

QUITE innocent but decidedly misguided is the third type of space-grabber, generally a new writer, a beginner at fiction. He has notions about "style" and he is meticulously careful in choosing the words which are to cloak his thoughts. Above all, the story he produces must be "well written"—and his idea of a well-written story is one in which there is a decided minimum of one-syllable words. Always he chooses the long and unfamiliar word, and wherever possible he uses a long clause or series of phrases where a word might have sufficed. To him also the simple sentence is anathema, but for a different reason than that which actuates the commercial space-grabber: he considers the simple sentence "inartistic."

I have read manuscripts from new writers which gave every evidence of having been written with the dictionary at the writer's elbow. These writers seem to regard the story as an opportunity, a vehicle, to parade their vocabularies. Hand in hand with the big-word addiction goes the penchant for long and flowery descriptions, solid paragraphs of high-flown composition which does nothing to help the story. And these writers wonder why their highly polished, carefully worded manuscripts bring home only rejection slips.

They cannot realize that the manuscripts they produce are worthless; that the story is buried in a mass of writing through which no reader will plow. They cannot realize that, in seeking style, they have failed to tell a story—and missed out on the style as well!

Many and varied are the definitions and explanations of style, but one thing is certain—style should be easy to read. Language, no matter how perfect, how admirably selected, how deftly turned, fails ignominiously if it is not easy and pleasant reading. Unusual and academic words which drive a reader to the dictionary may have an educational function, but they do not entertain; on the contrary, they irritate. They are not good style. Long involved sentences, in which a reader loses his way, make difficult reading. They slow up the story and make for unclearness. These, too, are not good style.

It is my belief that a young writer can best acquire a good style by forgetting about it, by ceasing to strive for it, and by centering his attention on the story he has to tell; by telling his story in just as straightforward and simple a way as possible. Direct, emphatic, compact sentences, which leave no room for doubt, which make their meaning absolutely clear. And do not be afraid of the good old forceful Anglo-Saxon words! "Sick" conveys a much clearer picture than "suffering from the effects of a chronic indisposition." When a single word will cover the ground of a whole phrase—by all means use the word. Adjectives and adverbs are nice serviceable words, but a story is not the competitor of a thesaurus; it is tiresome and futile to string in the qualifying words by the yard. Instead of helping to clarify the picture, such an array of modifiers only confuses.

An editor recently put the style and overwriting question in a nutshell. "One of the most important qualifications a writer should have," said he, "is the ability to write, 'A dog crossed the road—period.'" Mighty good advice, that.

For many a writer it would require at least seven hundred and fifty words to convey that bit of information; and, when they had finished, the reader would be in doubt as to whether or not the dog actually got across—or was lost somewhere in the shuffle.

When a simple compact sentence will say what you have in mind, use it. When a whole series of phrases and clauses can be eliminated, eliminate them. Remember that your reader is not interested in the airing of your erudition; he wants to hear the story you have to tell. Tell it to him—as simply and as quickly as possible.

ARE you a space-grabber, consciously or unconsciously? Look over your manuscripts and check up on yourself. If you have been getting careless, take a fresh hold. If you have been losing sight of your story in the pursuit of style, try the new recipe for a while; forget about style and tell your story.

Cut out the long-winded descriptions. Eliminate the useless conversations. Take out the irrelevant details. See to it that everything in your story has a place there; that there is no excess baggage for the editor to heave overboard. Go over your manuscript, pruning and condensing. Do your own cutting. Get the habit of sending out manuscripts that are ready to go into print as they stand—and the editorial doors will be wide open to you.

Just as an insurance against overwriting, store away the following little verse in your memory—or copy it and paste it over your typewriter:

*When you have a thing to say,
Say it! Don't take half a day—
If the tale has little in it,
Crowd the whole thing in a minute:
Life is short, a fleeting vapor;
So, don't fill the whole blame paper
With a tale which at a pinch
Might be cornered in an inch.*

—Anon.

The Professional Touch

Bad Writing Is the Supreme Cause of Rejection; When Is Your Work Finished? Scan Your Copy for the Commonplace Phrase or Loosely Expressed Thought; Value of a Critic

By Warren Hastings Miller

Fiction Writer, Author of "The Day's Work," "The Theme Chart," "Selling," Etc.

FIRST off, let us fling a few bouquets at good old Editor Hawkins and his magazine. The busy little sheet comes out once a month and we look for it, Lord, how we look for it! with its exchange of ideas, its good articles on the art of writing, its comment by editors who buy our output, its markets and handy lists. The good old custom of reading something every day on the professional art of making words say something is superlatively well worth while. Devote an hour to it every evening, brother, and see how it sharpens you up! Makes no difference if you've read *all* your technical books, over and over again. If you have twenty or thirty of them, they will all be full of news each time, potent with the fillip to better your own work. As Stevenson says, our profession is the most diabolical one known to man. Blazing ideas come hot to mind, staggering with their force and aptness—and how cold and lifeless they look when finally set forth in a clumsy string of words intended to be an English sentence! We achieved that thing on the paper, at which we look without enthusiasm. *We* did it, with words! It is a frowsy exposition of our ideas, without force or grace or picture, weak and intolerable—away with it! Thus the poor author feels when that blazing idea is at last set down in words that men may read!

Hawkins's magazine is full of good things, but I have yet to see a whole article in it devoted to nothing else than writing English. Said article probably came out before Homer Croy introduced me to Hawkins and his magazine, of which I at once became an enthusiastic supporter. If so, another screed on the subject may be about due.

"Learn to write a coherent English sentence." That choice bit of advice was flung at me by a certain critic, and not so long ago, either. I suppose the veriest beginner would sniff at it, for of course he or she

can write good English, learned that at high school and college before ever "taking up" the technique of fiction. Yet I thought it very good advice indeed, and was grateful. Of the many reasons for rejection I have yet to see properly stressed the supreme one, bad writing. Stories come out ragged and spotty and hard to read, lacking totally that smoothness of finish and workmanship which denotes the professional touch. The editors, bless 'em; buy these frowsy stories—my own included, please!—because of the appeal of their subject, their emotional effect, their novel setting. They have shut their eyes to the bad writing, the verbal incoherencies, the inattention to delicate shades of meaning, to all that goes into well-done work, but they *wish* the story could have been written better, and so do we when the horrid thing appears in type.

THE way to get on with this matter of writing smooth and good English is twofold. The first rests with the writer himself, and that is to keep a very jealous eye on all that goes out as finished work. *Is it finished?* How about colloquialisms? We speak and hear so much of them in our daily lives that they *will* creep into our writing. "The trouble with," is a typical colloquialism, bad English and not tolerated in any magazine which cares about good writing. There are thousands of these phrases, used daily until they seem "all right," but they bore an editor to extinction.

"For heaven's sake, why can't the man take the trouble to think up something good and fresh and exact, in place of that worn-out old thing!" he exclaims; but he rejoices when he recognizes your familiar colloquialism dressed in an original and good phrase which puts the same idea in literary form. Our business friends are much addicted to these delightful "bromidioms" of daily life. One hardly reads a letter without that pet

of theirs, "To be frank," cropping out. If it means anything it hints that the writer was *not* frank in what he was saying before. Therefore scan your copy carefully for the commonplace phrase of our usual thoughtless American speech. A very few such phrases vitiate the whole story by their effect of carelessness and vulgarity. They are only tolerated in dialogue, never in author's comment.

How much slang has crept into that "finished" story? The tendency to use slang in daily speech is so universal that the author when composing is simply forced to stop often, to say—"Hold on, there! Is not this the slang word we generally use?" There are legions of these near-English words, used so much and so often that we complacently regard them as quite available in composition, but they are not. They have no place in anything but the "Smart-Alec" story, and the reader sets you down as no writer. "She went into high" may be good "automobilese," but—"tie it outside." I should say that forty times a page one is held up in composing bywords which pop into mind easily because they are slang; but a man who cares for his workmanship and is striving to get the professional touch into it will stop and think out the correct word, every time.

To get dignity without dullness into one's work is the aim. The apt phrase, the splendid line, the ringing word, the humorous twist, these all give a brilliance that is far different from the flashy effect of the slang writer, and they stamp the work of the professional. Conrad's "Hazy splendor of the sea" is literature; Smith's "Stepped on the gas" is—nothing at all—for damme if I can name it!

* "TAKE rhythm." I stand speechless
* with fury before a sentence like that,
* but it is a favorite form with those argu-
* mentative writers who want you to "take"
* something by way of beginning a paragraph.
One finds it usually coupled with that fa-
* vorite, "To return to—" or "Getting back
* to—" after the author has divagated.—
* What I started out to say when that aston-
* ishing old ornament of our language surged
in was this: Learn to swing sentences. The sound and swing are more important in the effect on the silent reader than some unessential fact that to your mind seems important at that particular place. The tend-

ency of the careless writer is to break open his sentence with commas and insert there some fact that the reader should know—thereby ruining the ring and rhythm of his sentence. If the reader *must* know it, work it in somewhere else. The writer, once having mastered a clear and simple style, free from colloquialisms and slang, the ring of the sentence itself comes next in importance. Reading aloud is the great help here. If the sentence does not read easily, does not go with a snap, or if it causes the tongue to trip, mark it. For that sentence needs altering and rearranging in the quiet of the study. Emphatic words where they belong, at the beginning and end of the sentence, dependent clauses tucked in or snipped off—labor over the thing until your ear likes the sound of it. Most beginners need to be broken of the trick of writing prepositional phrases, some of them with two or three "of which's" thrown in to complete the measure of weak awkwardness. Get your written sentences as straight, as simple, and as forceful as those in your dialogue.

This thought leads direct to a species of measles that afflicts all our modern magazines. In writing the author's comment with the same brevity and force as the dialogue, the tendency is to overdo it entirely. We find stories abounding in sentences without a verb, in strings of words with a period at each end and otherwise bearing no resemblance to an English sentence. Do such liberties with our mother tongue add force? They are not tolerated in those magazines which care for good writing, but we find our more sensational magazines printing story after story full of this modern disease. Terse brevity, telegraphic style. (There is one of those very pseudosentences.)

Shall we go with it, or shall we be arrogant enough to scorn what we see successfully in print and *not* go with these young men? The modern style imagines it gains force by a brevity achieved by omitting the verb as "understood." Same with the noun; the reader gets your thought without bothering about any verb, understands your noun as implied. A man stoops over the body of his friend, shot through the heart. Dead. Shall we spoil it by writing, "He was dead?"

There you have it. But, "Good Lord, give us this day our daily verb!" groans the critic. He is right. Nearly all sentences gain strength by putting in the omitted verb.

Even the slipshod American reader is unconsciously irritated by its omission, and one who cares for good writing is aroused to scorn by it. The former expects it to come thumping out in its accustomed place, and is vaguely annoyed at being forced to assist an author to supply it. As for the latter, he sees through your game and resents your smartness, your pertness toward such an august thing as the English language.

My own thought on the matter is this: Words are bullets. They shoot the author's idea into the reader's mind. Therefore the fewer of them the better. There are times when the omitted verb lends dramatic force by its mere absence. But those times are infrequent, generally when some special effect is aimed at. To use that weapon of effect promiscuously is to dull its force when it really *is* needed. Therefore be sparing of it, but swing it in full force when some dramatic moment arrives and it comes in with tenfold power after pages of strictly correct English construction.

OF paragraphs—to revert to that ancient style by which subheadings were set off. How many young authors, and young assistant editors, too, appreciate the fact that the sole purpose of a paragraph is to contain a subject? If the author is not thorough with it, or cannot bring in some sidelight on the subject that involves a second paragraph, there is no excuse for breaking up the page merely for looks. Some magazines do that in an effort to obtain the effect of the one-line paragraph, noteworthy in those editorials for the feeble-minded who cannot embrace more than one very simple thought at a time. In those newspapers edited for people who keep parrots and canaries this is a favorite way of setting the editorial, but it is vastly irritating to both author and reader to see his magazine paragraphs chopped up that way. The author knows better and grinds his teeth, but can say nothing because one cannot quarrel with his bread and butter. The effect on the reader, however, is more serious. Even the illiterate one becomes frightened and uneasy because the familiar element of continuity is lacking and he misses it unconsciously. The link sentences belong at the beginning and end of each paragraph. They connect the thought of the previous and following paragraphs so that all moves smoothly. A paragraph in *Harper's* or *Century* will go even further

than that, subtly repeating certain key words of the last sentence of the preceding paragraph in the opening sentence of the one following it. The mind and the ear are both led along smoothly. It is finished work, the professional touch.

Imagine, then, the annoyance of an author who finds his story coming out with its paragraphs chopped up into scraps and the continuity sentences lost in the labyrinth because the original two are now three or four "paragraphettes" apart. If you are writer enough to deal with your subject in a paragraph of not more than three hundred words (and generally less) there should be no excuse for chopping it up further; but it's done, brothers, by editors, too, who have some particular office fetish to live up to. The only recourse seems to be to stop sending to that particular kind of magazine, which, if you value your name as a writer, you will do.

Of the story as a whole, the final question will be, "What is its effect as a work of art?" We will grant that the plot is ingenious, the drama strong and well handled, the sentences emphatic and clear. All this can be learned from books and practiced until one turns out a good salable story. What then? If you have ambition, your own criticism will go further than that. Is it something remotely resembling literature? That can only be answered by seeing how it is written, the words chosen, the fine attention to meaning, the deft handling of phrase and clause. It will not have the crystal clarity of McFee, or the resounding phrase of Conrad, but you can aim for them. They got these excellencies with words, English, workmanship. They were not satisfied with the sentence that nearly says something but one that *says* it. They got it by the hardest kind of hard work, toiling over rebellious clauses and jerky sentences and broken-backed ones, and words that did not fit, until a resplendent vehicle for their thought stood fashioned on the page.

IF this article can arouse in you the will to acquire the professional touch, the rest lies with you. If you are complacent over what you are writing now, "God be wi' you; let's see as little of each other as we may!" as says Jaques.

And I would like to add that the second aid to learning to write is the help of a living critic. The right one can prove inval-

unable to you. If the critic has a caustic tongue and also strikes out from the shoulder often, so much the better. The living critic is the grand cure for complacency; and more, he or she can point out faults of which the author himself is blissfully ignorant. Unless you know your faults how can you hope to correct them? And some of them are undiscoverable alone, so ignorant and concealed are most of us. By a critic I do not mean some professor who never wrote a published line of fiction and is

obsessed with the idea that all good writing stopped about 1880. No; I mean someone who knows good modern work when he sees it, has read good magazine fiction for years, and has a fine feeling for the ring of sentences and the delicate values of words. Him or her, when found, you will pay gladly for a strong and savage criticism of your work, its theme, its plot-handling, and above all its writing as an attempt at English literature.

Timing Your Story Market

By F. Ely Paget

HARPER'S MAGAZINE closed its short-story contest at the end of 1924, and began a contest for novels in 1925. Does this mean anything to the alert story salesman—agent, or writer, who markets his own product?

Decidedly! Just those facts, about that one particular contest of the many contests that have been waged, speak volumes to the writer who is striving to direct his wares to the right market at the right moment.

Let us take the *Harper* contests as the first example, and deduce market conditions from them. It is perfectly evident that, at the time the contest originated, this magazine needed short-stories. It needed so many of them, of the peculiarly high quality that the magazine uses, that a whole year of contests was planned. Very well—the first significance was, that here was an excellent market for "quality" stories, besides a chance at a generous list of prizes. An excellent market, even without considering the prize consideration—but not for novels.

The prize contests continued, but a Sherlock Holmes of the writing game would deduce that by the middle of the year the market for short-stories in the *Harper* offices would be less lively. By the end of the year this magazine should be well stocked and nothing, unless of compelling excellence, would be likely to find acceptance. How long thereafter this condition would be likely to continue is problematical. Probably till well along in 1925.

Now comes the novel contest. Contests, of course, are not originated merely to sup-

ply a demand; circulation managers consider them valuable stimulants to subscription lists and magazine newsstand orders. But evidence that this particular type of material—novels—was demanded is considerably stronger than circumstantial. What was true of the short-story in 1924 is equally true of the novel in 1925. The inference is that *Harper's* will be fairly well stocked with novels (prize winners and those purchased as a by-product of the contest) by the middle of 1925; that they will possibly be overstocked by the end of the year.

On the other hand, their stock of short-stories will be diminished in proportion. For this reason, the editor will be in a receptive attitude toward them.

But since you are writing stories that you intend to sell to *Harper's*, it is evident that you must be a writer of "quality" stories, and will have entree to the entire group of "Quality Magazines," which, besides *Harper's*, includes *Scribner's*, *Century* and *The Atlantic Monthly*. During the *Harper* contests, what of the markets in those other members of the group?

Each will be giving its own indications also, by contests, or by the nature of the material they are publishing, and certainly by statements of their editors in the writers' magazines. But what effect had or will the *Harper* short-story and the *Harper* novel contest have upon the supply and demand with these other magazines? Possibly you have a "reject" from *Harper's*, which you wish to submit to one of the others.

First, that is exactly what many other authors and their agents will be doing. However, the approach to the saturation point in the case of the other magazines will be slower, since it would follow that condition in the magazine holding the contest, several months later. Manuscripts submitted to the contests would be held for some time during the elimination process. Their authors would then receive them, perhaps revise or retype them, and send them out again.

Need we point the moral? Simply strive to time your own submissions if you are interested in the normal market as well as in the contests, so that your script arrives at the most favorable moment. In this case (submitting first to the *Harper* contest) the most favorable moment is the earliest. You hit the period of the liveliest demand of the magazine giving the contest, and are the more likely to make a sale; then, if you fail to land, you will be able to invade the other fields, bright and early.

There are more far-reaching deductions and conclusions to be made from these data, however. Quite often, you may anticipate a contest or demand by familiarizing yourself with the current demand, taking for granted the fact (after a consideration of evidence supporting your conclusion) that this demand will soon be filled, and then forecasting the next.

This is not so difficult to one who makes a study of the markets as it might appear when casually stated. There are numerous barometers to guide the story salesman. They must all be cross-tested. Let us consider some of the factors you may have to take into account.

Suppose the editors of an all-fiction maga-

zine similar to *Frontier* publish a statement in the market list of a writers' magazine that their particular need at that moment is for full-length novels. The obvious thing is to rush to them a full-length novel, suited to their requirements. But you do not happen to have one on hand? You may have only short-stories, and other writers, better prepared for the emergency, may fill the demand before you can complete the considerable task of formulating your plot and getting the story into cold type.

Before launching out on your forty-thousand-word task, cast your eye over the requirements of *Adventure*, *Triple-X*, *Popular*, *Short Stories*, or other magazines of this type. If they are asking, specifically, for long fiction, perhaps you will have ample time to write your novel for *Frontier*, because the efforts of writers of this special class of material will not be concentrated on one magazine, on account of the general demand.

If one of them has a contest as an additional inducement, your chances are better still; the magazine holding the contest will lure many scripts into its offices, and will probably hold them for scrutiny for a considerable length of time, thus keeping them out of competition in other fields.

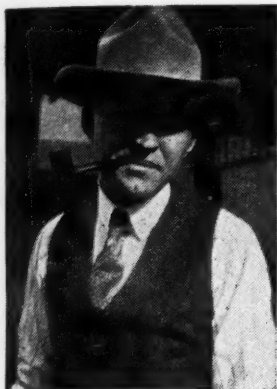
Within this brief space, obviously only a few hints as to procedure can be given; from this starting point, however, the writer who markets stories intelligently can build a method of his own that will aid him immensely. Or the embryo agent can profit thereby. It is really his specialty, since this system of close and constant surveillance of the market requires so much application, that the writer can better afford to pay commission on his work than to do it himself.



The Curse of Amateurishness

Some Crudities of Workmanship That Convey to the Editor the Fact That the Author Has Not Fully Served His Apprenticeship; Watch for These in Your Manuscripts

By Edwin Hunt Hoover



EDWIN HUNT HOOVER

EDITORS tell me that one of the greatest trials is to read a manuscript that contains everything wanted by the reading public and yet is written in such hopelessly amateurish style that complete revision—of which the author is incapable — would be necessary before a magazine

would dare to print it.

There would be no use in sending back the story with the suggestion that it would be acceptable if written with a professional touch—so that it flows smoothly, realistically, with the excrescences of amateurishness shaved off and (to mix similes further) “stuccoed” so that it has the appearance of having been devised and executed by a master architect. Encouragement of this sort would only result in the manuscript’s return to the editorial office in a condition of verbal wreckage—for the professional touch cannot be achieved overnight and any attempt on the part of the amateur author to make immediate and drastic changes in his style of writing will cause a sad confusion of stilted language and bungling artificiality.

On my desk lies a manuscript dealing with a situation wherein two hats of exactly similar shape and make play an important part. Jones, one of the characters, “hung his hat beside Smith’s and, as he did so, observed the similiarity.” Something about this phrase stuck out from the page like a sore thumb on an otherwise normal hand; and I contrasted the handling of

this situation with the craftsmanship displayed in a story that saw print some time ago. The yarn that was published contained a somewhat parallel situation—the only difference being that the climax depended on the similarity of two cowboys’ boots; but the boots ran through the plot like a minor chord in a symphony. It was quite apparent that the footgear would somehow bring about a crisis—or a denouement. And they did. But, while I was looking for “Red,” a cowboy, to kick “Bud,” his rival and owner of the other pair of boots, out of the matrimonial ring, “Bud” was sewing some incriminating evidence into the leather of his boots and “planting” it in such manner that “Red” was accused of a crime he never committed. The plot, taking it by and large, was “old stuff”; but it was nicely handled; the continuity was faultless; the reader saw the two pairs of boots, their *apparent* purpose, and could foresee, in a general way, what would be accomplished. The old trick of covering up the real plot by an obvious one; and the obvious plot was interesting enough to hold attention until the author was ready to spring his surprise as to the *real* purpose of the boots.

THE manuscript now before me forecasts amateurishly that the twin hats are going to accomplish something in a plot yet to be divulged—a bald and obvious “clue” has been “planted” to be triumphantly dragged into the foreground at a later date to “explain things.” The author has a first-class plot and goes blithely on developing crisis after crisis—and getting them gorgeously complicated—with a sublime confidence that his reader is so complete a dumb-bell as to have forgotten the chance comment about Smith’s hat being similar to that of Jones, which is the key to every situation and mixup.

Suppose, in the matter of the hats, the writer had depicted the episode in some such

manner as: Jones and Smith meet in the checkroom and Smith says to Jones: "This lid doesn't fit my head the way it should." "Well," says Jones, "maybe all the pleasant things said about you at the luncheon have swelled your dome—No, by Jove, you've got *my* hat! Dead ringers, aren't they? I got mine at Field's; I'll bet you saw how nobby mine was and got a duplicate.—By the way, that reminds me. I met Jared in Field's. He has a big deal on; worried sick because his lawyer has died, leaving the legal affairs of the company up in the air. He asked me who I'd recommend to take hold and straighten things out. I'm interested with him, you know, but I couldn't think of a lawyer with the quick grasp and necessary discretion—until this minute. I'll have Warner call you up. Glad my hat guided me to you."

Some such premise as this would set the plot to working along the line that Smith's hat and its similarity to that of Jones brought good luck to its owner—the obvious development. Under cover of this, the real plot might unfold naturally and—surreptitiously.

The writer of the Smith and Jones story may get his hat yarn in one of the publications that pay eight or ten cents a word—several years hence, when his amateurishness has worn off; for he has a good idea. But he has hard work ahead of him. He needs subtlety of style along with clarity of impression.

IT is difficult to define amateurishness. It crops out even in the work of successful writers once in a while—not enough, perhaps, to cause a rejection, but enough so that one or two implausibilities, in addition, would cause the story to fail. Beginners write in such manner as to make commonplace situations appear unreal and dull. The professional touch gives everyday happenings a fascinating aspect of being unusual and yet intensely *real*. The amateur will invent a character and let this "brain child" run wild—to the detriment of his story. The experienced writer will place an interesting character in the midst of an entertaining plot and the issue is a well-balanced yarn.

Perhaps the commonest defect among young authors—this applies to men and women alike—is the failure to transcribe to paper the thought in the writer's mind.

So firmly fixed is the "Big Idea" in the author's brain that it seems useless to insert it into the story! Of course he *thinks* it appears in the typewritten lines, but what he thinks is there is not there. On one occasion, I returned the manuscript of a writer who showed considerable promise with a letter in which I inquired about various things that had been left to the reader's imagination. There came a reply—four single-spaced, typewritten pages—*explaining* his story to me. I answered: "If you had incorporated in your story what you have in your letter, I might have grasped it." He took the hint, as I hoped he would, but unfortunately the revised copy was given over so freely to explanatory passages, which should have been worked into the action, that it didn't look as good as it did in the first draft.

COINCIDENCE is a rock on which many amateurs dash themselves to destruction. Nothing delights the student writer's heart so much as to portray an animosity developing in New York and culminating, by the chance meeting of the enemies, in some Australian bushman's camp—or the other way around. Either that or they write a love story wherein the enamored couple do their courting on board ship and meet later in a Nevada mining camp at a time when the heroine is about to be kidnaped by the villain, who is supposed to be in Alaska. To say that such climaxes spoil the illusion of reality is putting it mildly. But an "old hand" at fiction-writing could, by clever motivation, use the same set of conditions, and the same characters, and have a story that will be *convincing*. The latter may premise his tale on coincidence, but later developments will be the weaving together, by natural process, of the plot threads. He leaves little to luck.

There are hundreds of letters in my files from beginning writers who have "crowded" over me for adversely criticising manuscripts on the ground that they didn't "ring true." Their "come-back" is that "the people and situations I wrote about actually were and happened." If all these youngsters would study the old saw: "Truth is stranger than fiction" and learn a lesson from it, their work would improve and editors would receive more purchasable manuscripts. Nothing is more difficult than to transmute a condition from life into fiction

and make it convincing. We read every day, in the newspapers, of weird coincidences; strange adventures; unprecedented happenings of one kind and another. We pass them up with the comment: "Well, well! Can such things be!" But the same situations printed in a fiction magazine would bring forth disgusted snorts of "Bunk! Brainstorm! Blah! I'll write to the editor and tell him what I think of such stuff!" It is almost impossible to reproduce in fiction the environment and the conditions of plausibility that surrounded the original circumstance. Seasoned authors may take a situation from real life and work it into a story, but by the time the manuscript is finished little is left of the real-life drama on which it is based. Amateurs go about it in reportorial-romantic vein and get neither flesh, fowl or fiction out of it; yet they are disposed, many of them, to argue that editors "don't want truth." They don't—unless it reads with the "kick of truthfulness." Stories developed entirely out of the imagination are more apt to have the ring of plausibility.

THE "brother-and-sister" plot is another favorite of the novice. Not a week goes by but I read a story wherein the hero is distressed, flabbergasted and unmanned by the sight of his sweetheart—or the girl he wants to be his sweetheart—gamboling away the daylight hours in the company of a mysterious stranger. Frequently he sees the M. S. and the maid of his dreams go into a hotel—where the climax occurs and the heroine averts bloodshed by crying: "John, this is Bill, my brother!" Or the M. S.

and the girl beat it into the mountains where they are marooned by a snowstorm and the hero cries: "No matter what the foul tongue of slander says, I love her still!" He is then rewarded by the dulcet assurances of the girl that Bill has been her brother for these many years and will continue to be a relative after she and John are married.—This was a good situation when it originated many centuries ago, but it has been done so often that it is passe. Even yet, though, the "professional touch" can get it across occasionally, in one form or another—generally as an incidental phase instead of a major part of the plot.

THE quickest way for writers to improve their style is to analyze the craftsmanship of successful authors and determine how they gain their efforts. The "planting of clues" is deftly—not obviously—done; characterizations penetrate the understanding without conscious effort on the reader's part; description is subordinated to action; and "explanations" are, for the most part, unnecessary; with the premise definitely stated, the story gathers strength as it progresses—and ends very shortly after the climax. The professional concludes his yarn with brisk precision. The amateur is prone to append a few thousand words which should have been interpolated, unobtrusively, in the body of the manuscript, leaving no "loose ends" to pick up after the tale is complete in all essentials.

The professional touch is comparable to the touch of the artisan who has served his apprenticeship intelligently.

THE MENCKENS

THE menckens are a hard-boiled clan,—
Thumbing noses at the rabble;
They say the world is on the blink—
Lauding Dreiser, Joyce and Cabell.

At wholesome tales the menckens scoff,
And mother love to them's a joke—
"Crude hokum, blah and apple-sauce!"
And "Life is not like that!" they croak.

Success yarns, so they yawp, are boring,
Stories of open spaces worse;
But hear them cheer when some rude Russian
Describes a joy-ride in a hearse!

—Willard King Bradley.

The Deadliest Sin

Many Stories Fall by the Wayside Because They Irritate Some Editorial Antipathy, but Improbability Kills off the Most

By Jack Smalley

Associate Editor of Triple-X



JACK SMALLEY

THEY all have them—those hydra-headed aversions that leap out with a demoniacal screech to annihilate the unwary author who hits an editorial sore-spot.

Sometimes the particular sin that is unpardonable in the eyes of one editor is hailed as ingenious by another, and helps to

sell the story. But usually, the pet aversions that squat belligerently on the desk of an editor are of the same general breed and disposition.

I knew one editor who would be transformed into a calliope of steaming-hot "blues" at the spectacle of an otherwise impeccable hero who comes to get his revenge on the villains girded for the fray—with an empty six-shooter! At this stage the hero whispers a husky farewell to his horse, informing that comprehending animal—and us—that he forgot to bring along bullets. Or else he brings his gun ruthlessly to bear on the cattle rustler, and a *click* is all that comes of it. He ranks with the fool who didn't know it was loaded, yet the author picks out this man for his hero!

With shaking fingers, the editor would lay down the manuscript, clip out an advertisement for a memory course which always ran in his magazine, and send it to the author, with his regrets—and the manuscript.

Yet it was this same editor who would acclaim the passage where the hero—with the same innocuous hardware, apparently—

slays five of the rustlers and wounds three more, without reloading. He didn't mind a little thing like that because it was merely impossible. But the other sin was unforgivable because it was improbable.

And therein lies my Moral, with a capital M.

It has been expounded with every age since the days when Hammurabi started the first circulating library, but Oscar Wilde expressed it as well as any:

"Man can believe the impossible, but man can never believe the improbable."

After all, the editor is only a man, and quite human. A well-baked dish with the usual ingredients of plot, action, drama, character development and local color will not suit his taste if it bears the unmistakable taint of improbability.

To carry the metaphor further, why do so many authors leave out the salt? A little common sense would give their concoctions the flavor of probability, and all would be well.

FIRST among his considerations must be the accomplishment of a foolproof plot, avoiding as much as possible the perils of coincidence. But even with the foolproof plot in his hands to guide him in a natural manner toward an inevitable climax, the hero cannot be left entirely to his own resources. The author must keep an eye upon happenings along the way. Incident must follow incident in such a manner as will make it appear that the hero is pursuing his way without being led with a ring in his nose by an arbitrary author.

Suppose the hero is to overhear a plot destined to play an important part in the development of the story. He should not merely happen along. Lead the hero—or whatever character is cast for the part—under the conspirators' window through a

natural impulse, and see how much more effectively he listens to the plotters. Perhaps you could let him suspect one of the men and follow him, or allow him to see a light in a window supposed to be deserted, or any number of simple devices to bring about the desired action, without relying upon improbabilities.

In this way the action gathers force, the suspense is heightened by building up toward this bit of drama, and what might be otherwise a weak and awkward coincidence actually is made to strengthen the narrative.

TAKE the last manuscript that has come back with its tail between its legs, and see if it hasn't been this odor of improbability that has made it distasteful to the editor. Try the test on the passages you yourself know to be doubtful, and then go over the rest of the situations that carry your story. You will be surprised to find the number that creep into the best regulated manuscripts. Are there impossibilities to be found also? Don't worry; this was true of the classic "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," and the popular "Tarzan of the Apes."

So also in a story (that attracted a rather unusual amount of favorable comment) which appeared serially in *Triple-X*: "The Amazing Case of Fargo Dorn," by Edwin Baird. Mr. Baird, himself an editor, contrived a remarkable character who, like a visitation of the devil, spreads an epidemic of destruction through one particular Chicago family, through the weirdest sort of coincidences.

Yet incident was mounted upon incident in such a natural succession that he attained

the impossible with ease, and made the tale seem sanely probable.

The editors of the "true" magazines protect themselves with a zoo of aversions, for if a story strikes one false note, the effect is spoiled and the precious illusion of truth destroyed. It is imperative that the story sound true, even if it is not. All the affidavits and declarations of an author to the purpose of proving his tale authentic mean little to an editor if it is marred by improbabilities that make it sound like fiction.

There are the host of difficulties that beset the narrator of a first-person story. Few editors can keep their aversions in leash when a narrator insists on reading the thoughts of the other characters, or assumes an omniscience that enables him to be unaccountably familiar with events beyond his territory.

Obvious as it may appear, it is this very fault that ruins many a story, for it is necessary either to clutter up the action with tedious explanation or take a chance that the editor will pass it by. The chance is indeed slim. Just as the perils of first-person narratives are legion, so are the pet aversions of the editors who read them.

Of course, an editor cannot buy all the stories that get past all his antipathies. Perhaps he has room for fifteen stories a month, and receives for consideration a thousand manuscripts a month.

SCORES of excellent stories must be rejected. But depend on it, the first to fall will not be those whose authors have applied the rule, "Improbabilities are impossible," to their manuscripts before they sent them forth to brave the editorial dens.

NEXT MONTH

Quarterly publication of THE
AUTHOR & JOURNALIST'S "Handy Mar-
ket List," with names and addresses of
all principal periodical markets brought
down to date, with rates and methods of
payment and types of material desired.

One Hour A Day

By Lily Rutherford Morris

SOMETIME back in 1921, I read an article by Sinclair Lewis in which he emphasized the fact that spare moments and not rare days of leisure furnish the aspiring author with time in which to write. That is, if one really wants to write and has the ability to do so.

That article impressed me thoroughly. It did more toward actually setting me to work than anything else that ever came to me. I belonged to the class referred to by Mr. Lewis as "those who just long to write but never can find the time." Being a busy housekeeper, the mother of four children, the doer of all the housework and the family sewing, I felt justified in claiming lack of time as the reason for pushing back, day by day, my ever-increasing desire to seize a pencil and start something on the blank pages of a tablet.

But when in the course of the article he abruptly asked the question, "Look here. Could you get an hour free every day?" I began to think seriously, for I knew that I could.

"All right," he continued, "an hour a day for six days is six hours a week, about twenty-five hours a month. Anybody who is not deaf or blind and addicted to *dementia* can write between a hundred and a thousand words an hour. Making it a minimum of a hundred, you can do five thousand words in two months—and that is a fair-sized short-story. At the maximum of a thousand, you could do a short-story in a week.

"Very few writers produce more than one short-story a month, in the long average, though they can use as much as they wish of the twenty-four hours a day. That is because they become wearied of inventing, of planning new stories; must spur themselves by the refreshment and recreation of real life. But that real life you are getting all day. You have, as far as time goes, just as much chance as they. If you concentrate an hour a day you can produce somewhere between half as much as and four times as much as a professional

writer, provided always that you can write and that you have the will power to use your ability."

Many duties as were mine, I knew I could manage for the hour each day. This had seemed so short a time to me, before then, that I had not considered it worth while to attempt anything original within it, unless it was to meditate on some pet theme I hoped some day to tackle, when my children were grown and I should be able to keep a servant and to buy our clothes ready-made so that I might have ample time in which to concentrate on my literary efforts.

But a story a week, at the rate of a few hundred words a day, looked good to me, and right then and there I determined to try it—not writing a long story a week, but doing all I could for an hour each day.

I have done it, and now I want to add to the inspirational statements of Mr. Lewis one of my own: the work grows easier, goes faster, and becomes more profitable each day. The beginning is the hardest.

THE first thing I learned was the importance of getting my tools together in a convenient place where they could be kept intact for the next day's work. With so little time at my disposal, I learned that I could not afford to spend ten or fifteen minutes in looking up pencils, pads, notes, etc. When the free hour comes round I am eager to pick up the threads of my story or article as quickly as possible and carry it along sixty minutes further, according to the scheme I have subconsciously been nursing since laying down the pencil the day before.

It has not been possible to claim the same hour each day. Usually, I write from half-past nine to ten, the hour that comes between getting the house in order for the day and time to begin preparations for the noon meal which, at my house, means dinner for six. Often there is company. When morning interruptions come I write in the after-

noon just after a short nap, or in the evening after the rest of the family retire or get settled down to work of their own.

About five hundred words an hour is a good writing rate—that is, an hour for writing the rough draft, which often requires so much revision that you may have to give next day's time to whipping it into

shape and typing it. Some writers, perhaps, may be able to write their first copy on the machine and have it letter- and thought-perfect; but even those who must write and revise and again revise should be able to show real accomplishment if they rigidly adhere to this one-hour-a-day working schedule.

A Forward Step In Civilization

By Helen A. Monsell

IN poring over some dusty magazine files of the early 50's recently, I made a discovery. Rejection slips are not as old as the hills, they are as new and humane as chloroform! When the editor, after your weary three-weeks' wait, returns your offering, with printed thanks, you think you're terribly abused, don't you? Well, just suppose this was 1850 and you wanted to write. Picture yourself, armed with a quill pen, laboriously copying your story. Typewriters, of course, were still in the land of unborn babes, and your masterpiece—say you called it "The Story of Ezekiel"—must be written by hand.

You would gather the sheets together and count them with fear and trembling, for postage was postage in 1850. Let's see—ten cents for the first sheet for the first one hundred and fifty miles; twenty-five cents for four hundred miles. Then if the story is fifteen pages and has to go three hundred miles—

Calculation breaks down before such arithmetic. Most of us, if we had lived in 1850, would perforce have been poets, and written sonnets on single sheets.

But suppose that the postage is paid. Off the manuscript goes to that gem among magazines, *Godey's Lady's Book*. For the first month you are too dazed at your own temerity to be worried; the second, remembering the editorial caution that "our friends must keep on their armor of patience," you pass uneasily, yet bravely. As the end of the third month approaches, you frankly give yourself up to "watchful waiting." Soon you will know your fate!

Aha! the mail service—you pounce on a bulky package. Is it your manuscript?

Not at all—it's *Godey's Lady's Book* itself. Then you expect to see your story right in print? What nonsense! they've had it only three months! With trembling fingers you turn to the back of the magazine. There is the fateful paragraph that spells your doom. Behold!

TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS: The following articles are accepted: "To One Who Dislikes Flowers"; "I Think on Thee"; "Song of the Spirit of Life"; "I Love Thee, Quiet Night"; "Narrative of a Shipwreck"; "Palermo"; "Crossing the Obion, an Incident of Western Life."

Not there! You drop the magazine in dismay, in disappointment so deep that you refuse even to look for the new embroidery patterns your little sister wants for her pantalets. At last she takes the magazine from your listless fingers to look herself, and her quick eyes fall on something that has escaped you. "See here, Sis," she calls, "what was that story you wrote? Look."

You follow her stubby finger, and behold:

"The Story of Ezekiel" is not sufficiently finished in style to suit the pages of our work. Yet the writer has talents worth cultivating.

Rejected, and that publicly! The world, the village, even your very family, will know all about it!

My discovery has had its effect. Meekly now I open my typewriter to start my story off to pastures new, but before consigning the old rejection slip to the flames of the kitchen stove, I pat it lovingly. "There is nothing cold and heartless about you," I tell it cordially. "You are prompt and you are private. Why, you're a forward step in civilization!"

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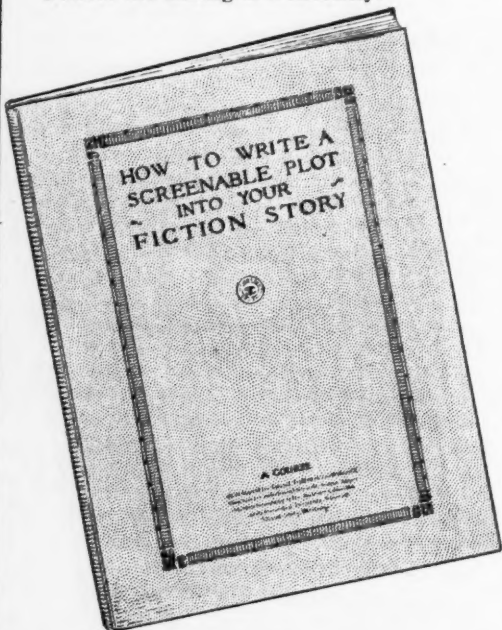


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Each buyer of the course is entitled to criticisms of three assignments, including constructive criticisms of a complete story of 5,000 words or less, **without extra charge**. This course is an integral part of The Author & Journalist's Simplified Training Course in Short-Story Writing, but is complete in itself. A limited de luxe edition for general sale, limited to 500 copies, has been issued. The book of lessons is cloth bound and beautifully printed on eggshell paper. A separate booklet contains the assignments. After the de luxe edition is exhausted the course will be obtainable only as a part of the S. T. C. Send for the free booklet, "How to Sell Stories to the Moving Picture Producers."

ment of screen plot, single line of interest, treatment of situations, knitting the plot, balance and proportion.

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The Barrel

Out of Which Anything May Tumble

Is Interviewing a Lost Art?

PERHAPS no type of magazine is more besieged with interview material than THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST. More than nine out of ten interviews that are submitted for our editorial judgment go back to the authors. They are, perhaps, interviews with big names in the literary field, but they are inadequately handled. Reflection on their inadequacy has resulted in a few thoughts which may prove suggestive to the interviewing clan in general.

In the first place, it should be borne in mind that an interview is likely to be considered by the editor only because for some reason it is impossible for him to secure a direct expression from the person interviewed. We, for example, would rather publish an article by Irvin S. Cobb than an interview with him—but being unable to pay ten cents a word—or whatever fabulous amount he receives—for that article, we must perforce content ourselves with an interview. In case of a big man in some other line of endeavor, an interview may be acceptable because the subject isn't qualified as a writer to express his own views.

The great trouble with the average interview is its superficiality. It bears every evidence of having been obtained in the usual formal journalistic manner. The interviewer goes to the subject armed with a prepared list of questions. Being accorded half an hour's time, he fires these questions one after another at the subject, who answers them offhand as best he can.

The answers represent no great amount of thought on the part of the subject, and probably do not touch any of the springs which would lead him really to express himself. As a matter of fact, the interview, when written up, usually tells the reader nothing beyond the copybook maxims that the interviewer has been able to induce his victim to sponsor.

The secret of real interviewing is in just getting the subject to talk and reveal himself. This cannot be accomplished in a half-hour's questioning and answering—which accounts in part for the fact that so few worth-while interviews are published. The fact is further accounted for by the difference in mental caliber between the interviewed and the interviewer. How can an interviewer with immature views upon life hope to catch the spirit of a message delivered by someone whose understanding transcends the ordinary?

Superficially the great writer, or the great person in any walk of life, is much like the rest of mankind. He wears much the same clothes, eats the same food, and entertains much the same views upon golf, the political situation, and religion, as his next-door neighbor. But deep, down inside, he is somehow different from his fellows. It is this difference that accounts for his greatness and makes it possible for him to produce results that are beyond the ordinary. The successful interview is one that—at least to some extent—reveals this fundamental difference. It exposes

not the subject's trivial views on trivial matters, but his philosophy of life and the self-discipline which has made him what he is. The article which sets forth this unknown quantity will be an article with a big idea in it.

Perhaps the ideal interview will never be written. We live in hope.

Protecting Readers From Literary "Sharks"

IT is probable that few readers of THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST realize the amount of care taken to protect them from unscrupulous advertisers. Since our stand was taken against the misleading advertisements of various photoplay schools and agencies, with accompanying banishment of them from the columns of THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST, we have turned down many hundreds of dollars in advertising. This stand may have resulted to our financial disadvantage, but it certainly has paid dividends in satisfaction.

A recent example is contained in our reply to the advertising agency which submitted a six-months' contract for a full-page advertisement for a new concern professing to give a supercriticism service for authors. The advertising copy, which we rejected, was clipped from a recent issue of another writers' magazine, in which it had already appeared. The following extracts from our letter, setting forth some of the reasons for rejecting it, are self-explanatory:

Gentlemen:

Your letter authorizing us to insert full-page advertisement in The Author & Journalist, for six months, for your client, * * *, was held for my consideration.

The advertisement you submit is not acceptable because your clients make promises which we know cannot be carried out as the average reader would be led to expect. The copy states: "We will make that rejection a sale." This is a promise impossible of fulfillment in the majority of cases. For the past ten or more years we have operated a criticism bureau of our own. We employ the most competent critics it is possible to secure, and we know that their criticisms are very helpful in the majority of cases. While we can show writers how to improve their products and thus progress toward their goal of producing salable work, we know that it is impossible in every instance to do what your clients promise.

In a further paragraph your clients state their guarantee: "Our criticism will sell your work for you." This, again, is a promise impossible of fulfillment. They have qualified the statement by adding: "If it fails we will work with you further, free of charge, until the sale is made." The loophole which this leaves your clients is likely to be overlooked. The inexperienced writer, who nearly always thinks his manuscript has failed to sell because of some trivial defect, will be attracted by the dazzling promises in such phrases as (quoting further from the advertisement), "Send us your latest rejection and get a check."

We feel that this advertisement is definitely misleading. I have written thus fully so that you may understand our point of view and the considerations which make it necessary for us to reject the copy as offered.

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The criticism tells the writer whether his conception is worth-while or inferior, and why; whether it is in line with editorial demands and what changes are necessary to bring it into closer conformity with requirements. The plot, characters, style, incidents, introduction, climax, conclusion and other features are discussed, and suggestions for improvement, both general and specific, are made.

Finally the criticism deals with the commercial possibilities of the manuscript, and a list of markets to which it seems best adapted is furnished. If the manuscript contains no possibilities of sale, the author is shown, as far as possible, how to turn out better work in future.

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The Wit-Sharpener

A Monthly Exercise in Plot-building—Prizes for the Best Developments

DESPITE summer heat, Wit-Sharpener contestants displayed ingenuity in working out the baseball problem involving George Johnson and his son Jack. The trend of the proverbial great minds was in the channel of developing George into a league umpire because of his honest decision on the crucial play of the climactic ball game. Two of the prize-winners contain this plot development.

The problem:

George Johnson never made his college baseball team. Consequently he spent his life training his son Jack to realize his ambition. Jack made a reputation as pitcher in high school. Bad eyes team. His father often umpired the games and won a name as a square umpire. Jack received offers of scholarships, but Dad's Alma Mater should be his in September, though he dreamed of a day when he should play professional ball and marry Estelle.

In May came the intercity championship game. Jack hurt his wrist, so Easterling, whom Estelle loved, pitched. Johnson umpired. In the first of the ninth inning Easterling went to pieces, filling the bases with two out and his team one run ahead. The man at bat was not much good, but the leadoff man who had made most of the day's hits followed. Jack, thinking he could retire the one man, went in.

Johnson knew that a minor league scout was in the crowd and feared that if his son made good in a pinch, he would get a bid, and so would not go on to college. There were three balls and two strikes on the batter when Jack set himself to retire him and pitched one over a little wide, but near enough to be called a strike if the umpire wanted to. Calling it a strike would give his son a chance at his ambition and the possibility of carrying Estelle, but the college would lose him. Calling it a ball would bring in a run and the next batter might win the game. If it went to extra innings, Jack's arm would go back and it meant a defeat, anyway. His son would likely lose confidence in himself and the years of training would be wasted. How does the umpire decide?

Austin Lewis, 575 Summit Avenue, Pasadena, California, was given first prize. His solution contains some elements that are open to question, but on the whole it is a fairly logical plot sequence, presenting a climax situation with melodramatic possibilities.

First Prize Winner:

Johnson honestly calls a ball, walking batter. Lead-off man slamming out hit, game is over. Jack, indignantly suspecting his father of unfairness to bar him from league ball, declares he'll never attend college.

Getting a mercantile job, he asks Estelle to marry him when his salary shall become large enough. She confesses she has promised to wed Easterling. As Easterling is a ne'er-do-well with-

out steady job, Jack is amazed, but Estelle explains her fiancée has a contract, with cash advance, to pitch for a league team. Jack, though skeptical, has no proof to offer Estelle.

Meanwhile Jack's father urges him to reconsider and enter college. He finally consents on condition that Johnson admit the pitch was a strike. He refuses and things are deadlocked.

Easterling's presuming conduct since engagement displeases Estelle and she inclines toward Jack, but feels bound by her parents. Easterling, seeing her coolness, decides, while intoxicated, to force a hasty marriage.

Jack, coming excitedly out of postoffice with an official letter from the league president for his father, which he feels must concern himself, forgets it in the greater excitement of seeing Easterling drive past holding Estelle, protesting, in her seat. She calls imploringly, "Jack." Leaping into the auto with his father, Jack dashes in pursuit. The chase ends when Easterling wrecks his car. Estelle is only buried, but he is mortally injured. Before dying he confesses his money came from gamblers who bribed him to throw games. Jack remembers the letter. It is an offer to Johnson to umpire in the league.

"Our scout saw your square decision against your own son on a close ball," the letter concludes.

Johnson glances at Jack. "What about college now?" Jack relays the glance to Estelle.

"I'll wait," she murmurs, slipping her hand in his.

Carl Coolidge, 3459 S. Arlington Street, Los Angeles, comes in for second money with a "compromise" solution which gives young Johnson a baseball career (in prospect) without the sacrifice of his college education.

Second Prize Winner:

Score tied; bases filled, ninth inning, three balls—two strikes. His strained arm hurting him fearfully, Jack faced the batter. His next pitch was so close to the plate that it might have been called either way. But Jack's father, umpiring, drawled: "Take your base!"

In the grandstand was Estelle, who believed herself in love with Easterling, previously batted from the box. Also watching was Scott, minor league scout.

On the field rushed Easterling, cursing so loudly that he could be heard in the stands. He would have attacked the umpire had not others interfered and led him from the field. George had called the play as he had seen it, though to have termed it a strike would have meant victory for his son. Jackson had his heart set on his boy attending his old Alma Mater, but knowing of his love for Estelle, feared that an offer from the minor league might tempt him to forego a college career, as with a good salary he might persuade Estelle to marry him.

Frantic with pain, Jack put the spectators aghast by sending the outfielders to the bench. It was

not a grandstand play. Another score and his team would be beaten. Jack felt that only by being placed in a desperate position could he forget his throbbing arm. His psychology proved true—three fast strikes resulted. The next inning his team won.

Scott sought Jackson. "The kid's a wonder," he said, "going to be a knockout. Do your best to get him to go to college—four years there and he'll be ripe for the big league!"

Jackson was overjoyed, would have rushed to Jack and embraced him, but just then Jack was engrossed in a girl who seemed to be regarding him in an entirely new light.

The third Californian (though judges did not observe this regional complex until the shouting was all over—nor would it have made any difference in their decision) to take laurels is Victor Dyer of San Francisco. His development is not very exciting, but it has qualities of naturalness and realism that are enticing.

Third Prize Winner:

"That would be a ball if I was still in the box," said Easterling, who had joined Estelle. "But now—" and he shrugged his shoulders expressively.

"George Johnson is the squarest umpire we have." You have no right to make insinuations," replied Estelle warmly.

The crowd hushed momentarily.

How should he decide? Johnson resolutely took hold of himself. He had always been square and taught his son to play the game. The ball was a little wide. Be the consequences what they would, there could be but one decision. "Ball," he cried.

The next batter sent a grounder which second fumbled and Jack's team went down to defeat.

"That's the best umpiring I've seen for a long time," declared the scout, "I'm on the lookout for an umpire for our league and if you'd care for the job it's yours. That decision you gave in the ninth finally decided me."

"I thought you were after a pitcher," said Johnson with a smile at the thought of how his boyhood's ambition to be on a big team was at last to be realized.

"I may be, in another year or two," was the reply, with a meaning glance toward Jack.

"You don't seem in the least discouraged," Estelle was saying to Jack. "Anyone can win a

game, but it takes a man to accept defeat with a smile, and I like a good sport." She looked so pointedly at Easterling that he melted away in the crowd. "Tell me what you are going to do when you leave college."

"What we are going to do, you mean," he replied.

Estelle made no denial.

Wit-Sharpener for August

CONTESTANTS for the current contest will be asked to devise a solution for the following "Problem of Ingenuity":

Tabor Ruggles, scientist and collector of curiosities from the corners of the earth, receives a letter Tuesday afternoon signed "Knido," advising him that a certain metallic box which was supposed to have been the jewel container of Asiatic potentates generations ago will be stolen from his residence at two o'clock a. m., Thursday of that week. The casket is of great intrinsic value by reason of the emeralds and diamonds with which it is incrustated; as an oddity it cannot be replaced.

Ruggles is vastly agitated because this same "Knido" has been operating successfully in the community for some time, always forewarning his intended victims. Instead of informing the police—who had been used vainly by others in attempts to frustrate "Knido"—he enlists the co-operation of scientific friends, who busy themselves devising safeguards which will prevent "Knido's" entrance undetected, through doors or windows.

At midnight Thursday, Kester, archeologist, accompanied by his sister; Rogers, geologist; Hamblin, metallurgist, and his wife; Berger, radio expert, and his fiancée, Beryl Agiston, assemble with Ruggles in his darkened home. Each conceals himself in a corner of the room wherein the jewel box—luminized to make it conspicuous for the watchers (and also as a sort of humorous challenge to "Knido")—reposes on a mantel.

At two o'clock promptly, a slight breeze enters the place; various objects in the room begin to tremble and rattle. Different members of the watch party have varied experiences—Kester feels a tug at his hip pocket, a comb is snatched or falls from Miss Kester's hair; Mrs. Hamblin's button-adorned skirt receives a violent tug; Miss Agiston screams that someone is taking her bracelet. Confusion ensues. Ruggles is the first to regain self-possession and shouts as he sees the phosphorescent casket sailing blithely out of a window which has been mysteriously opened—transported, apparently, by unseen hands.

PROBLEM: Develop this situation to an effective conclusion. For the best development a prize of \$5 will be given; for the second best, a prize of \$3, and for the third best, a prize of \$2.

CONDITIONS: The plot outline as completed must contain not more than 400 words, exclusive of the original problem. It must be typed or legibly written. Manuscripts returned only if stamped envelopes are inclosed. Only one solution may be submitted by the same person.

Manuscripts must be received not later than September 1. Winning outlines will be published in the October issue. Address the Contest Editor.

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THE S. T. C. NEWS

A Page of Comment and Gossip About
the Simplified Training Course and
Fiction Writing Topics in General

VOL. 2, No. 8

AUGUST, 1925

EDITED BY DAVID RAFFELCK

SHOWS THE WAY

New Course Enables Writer to Correlate Fictional and Screen Technique

The Author & Journalist's new book-course, "How to Write a Screenable Plot Into Your Fiction Story" is taking hold in a big way. It is thoroughly unique and is deserving of the praise it is winning. A few advance copies were mailed to S. T. C. students and many have already written to express their satisfaction with this pioneer work. The haphazard days of fiction and screen writing are over. The way to success in screen production via the published story, has hitherto been uncharted. Now "How to Write a Screenable Plot Into Your Fiction Story" shows the way and it is no wonder that both professional and beginning writers are highly gratified.

A writer in Louisiana had this to say about the new course:

I have read "How to Write a Screenable Plot Into Your Fiction Story" through twice and expect to read it through several times more.

In my opinion this is a very clear treatise on the subject, and I believe that a careful study of the book should enable anyone capable of writing a story to do so in such a way as to make it screenable.

In part, another author of Washington, wrote as follows:

I have just finished the first reading of the volume, "How to Write a Screenable Plot Into Your Fiction Story."

It seems to me to treat with very necessary knowledge for the fiction writer of today who wishes to make the most out of his work. Continuing with the methods of the S. T. C., the study is presented in a comprehensive manner. If the student has the ability to write successful modern fiction he can scarcely fail to increase his profits in the photoplay field through subscribing to this course.

The love of Books, the Golden Key
That opens the Enchanted Door.
Andrew Lang.

WHAT A DREAM!

Here's a dream for any writer to wish to come true: Some novelists complain that their publishers don't stand back of them, that they don't push their books as they should. The biggest best-sellers are seldom advertised in more than a hundred newspapers and in a few magazines. Think of having your book advertised in 500 newspapers. Now, along comes Harold Bell Wright, the master realizer of dreams. Appletons are publishing his latest book, "A Son of His Father," and will advertise this book in 7,042 newspapers and in the big magazines such as The Saturday Evening Post, Ladies' Home Journal, McCall's, etc.

A Few Words of Gossip With the Editor

The Simplified Training Course was under discussion, I understand, at the annual Cowboys' Reunion held at East Las Vegas, N. M. This big rodeo always attracts a number of writers and a group got together to compare notes.

It is interesting and somewhat amusing that these writers felt alarmed. They were actually worried because the S. T. C. is really training writers so that they can sell their stories. This group of professional writers wondered what was going to happen to the market as more and more writers were developed by the S. T. C.

It is peculiar that members of a profession are sometimes the most gloomy about their own work. Lawyers urge tyros not to become lawyers, doctors say, "Don't become physicians," and some writers shiver with the thought that others are preparing themselves for the profession of authorship.

The fiction field is big enough for all who are capable of entering. At present there is no diminishing of the number of magazines. There is trepidation in some quarters; because so many magazines are now being published that it would seem some of them must go under. Whether or not this will happen is of little consequence to the writer. The various markets do exist now and are buying great quantities of stories. "Make hay while the sun shines," is a good motto in this instance.

The only writers who need feel any uneasiness are the writers who are barely "getting by." As the S. T. C. continues to develop writers of ability who have been trained professionally and are fully equipped to attain success, the poorer writers may be shoved aside. With the entrance in the field of more capable authors, the standard will be raised and the best will survive. There is no call for pessimism in this. Let each writer and would-be writer look to his equipment. It is not necessary to worry about competitors.

And while on this subject we wish again to call the attention of readers to The Author & Journalist advertising. The S. T. C. does not claim that every student will be enabled to sell his stories—that a market is waiting for every student. It is possible to train for successful authorship only those who have innate ability, and some able writers, because of peculiarities of temperament, even after receiving the rigid, practical S. T. C. training, may not be able successfully to cope with the market demands. The majority of writers of ability who are S. T. C. trained are achieving real success.

The S. T. C. is of great value in training persons to express

WHAT IS READ

Magazine Conducts Survey to Show Which Magazines Are Most Popular

In Owensboro, Kentucky, are 1,460 families. All of them buy some magazines. Representatives of the Macfadden publications canvassed virtually every family in this town to determine what magazines came to their homes. They found that 339 families read The Saturday Evening Post and more than 100 read one or more of these: The American, Ladies' Home Journal, True Story, Pictorial Review, Liberty, McCall's, Cosmopolitan, Red Book and Literary Digest. The magazines found to be most preferred by these families were The American and True Story Magazine.

The women's, confession and family magazines were most in favor. Blue Book and Western Story Magazine topped the list of the action-story magazines.

WHAT SOME WRITERS DID

One sent to Cupid's Diary a story that had been submitted to that publication and rejected a year ago. This second time it was accepted and printed.

Another completely revised a novelette, cutting it down to short-story length and thus sold a story that "couldn't be sold."

Another studied police cases for which no solution had been found, employing his own version of what might have happened in stories he wrote.

Another told "fortunes" by cards and found several interesting plots.

Another invented characters for a true story about people not very satisfactory for fiction—and sold the story.

Another happened to write a humorous Western story instead of his usual serious story and opened up a wonderful market that now pays him a fine living.

Another decided to make use of his forestry service experience and wrote stories about forest rangers, selling them, after persisting, to several markets.

Another sold a story on its one hundredth trip to a high-class magazine by which the story had previously been three times rejected within ten years.

themselves, preparing them for an interesting and oftentimes highly remunerative profession. Every school, whether it teaches law, medicine, divinity, or any other profession, will accept and encourage to enroll as large a number of students as show any inclination to take up the work. The S. T. C. likewise encourages writers to take up its training, for it is reliable, practical, and result-bringing. Always a market will exist for the proficient.

THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

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THE AUTHOR'S TRADE JOURNAL
FOUNDED 1916

Published Monthly at 1835 Champa Street
Denver, Colorado

WILLARD E. HAWKINS, EDITOR

DAVID RAFFELCOCK EDWIN HUNT HOOVER
JOHN H. CLIFFORD
Associates

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CONTRIBUTIONS of superior interest to writers will be considered and offer made if acceptable. Stamped envelope for return if unavailable should be inclosed.

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FIGURES ON WRAPPER show date to which your subscription is paid. Act promptly in renewing or reporting change of address. Magazine will be discontinued at expiration of subscription period, unless renewal is specifically ordered.

Entered as second-class matter, April 21, 1916, at the Post Office at Denver, Colorado, under the act of March 3, 1879.

Literary Market Tips

(Continued from Page 2)

The Chicago Ledger, 500 N. Dearborn Street, Chicago, which has long been an active market for short-stories and serials, paying low rates, but promptly on acceptance, has been discontinued, as has also the *Chicago Blade*, a weekly news sheet. The *Chicago Blade* and *Ledger*, a monthly, has taken their place. The *Blade* was over thirty years old and the *Ledger* was fifty years old. Both had been losing money heavily within recent years, it is reported.

The Printing Art has been incorporated with *Printed Salesmanship*, the combined magazine being published under the latter name by the University Press, Cambridge, Mass.

The Magazine World, 8 Arlington Street, Boston, is a new monthly magazine to appear October, 1925, using reprinted material, and designed for English instructors and students. It will be published under the same management as *The Atlantic Monthly*.

Wireless Age, 326 Broadway, New York, will be combined with *Popular Radio* beginning with the September issue.

The Spur, 425 Fifth Avenue, New York, according to a contributor, reports promptly, paying 1 cent a word or better for travel material, illustrated if possible, on out-of-the-way places, written in a manner to interest society people.

Young Israel, Room 10, 1520 Broadway, New York, outlines its policy thus: "Our material is rather highly specialized, since the magazine is primarily intended to supplement the teaching in Jewish religious schools. It therefore deals largely with biblical material, and uses many stories touching upon present and past life of the Jews."

The Strand Magazine, *Grand Magazine*, *The Home Magazine*, *The Happy Magazine* and *The Crusoe Magazine*, all of 8-11, Southampton Street, Strand, W.C. 2, London, Eng., use American short-stories. Rates are approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ cent a word on publication, except that *The Strand Magazine* is more generous.

The Wide World Magazine (George Newnes, Ltd., Publishers), 8-11 Southampton Street, Strand, W.G. 2, London, Eng., uses much American material—articles and short true stories of adventure theme. All must be true. If you have a good true story of adventure in which you yourself figure, and have no other pictures, then send your own portrait. One or more photographs are necessary to each story or article, no matter how short. Payment is on publication (usually around four months from receipt of material) at a rate averaging $\frac{3}{4}$ cent a word. Complimentary copy of magazine is sent the author.

Grit, Williamsport, Pa., a weekly family paper, using many short, usually illustrated, articles on uncommon subjects, reports promptly and pays at once on acceptance at newspaper rates.

The Morning Telegraph, Fiftieth Street and Eighth Avenue, New York, G. D. Eaton, literary editor, writes: "I occasionally buy short poems for the Sunday literary page. The rate is a fixed and nominal one, \$5 per poem, poems not to run less than sixteen lines, nor more than thirty, because of the make-up of the section."

Zion's Herald, 581 Boylston Street, Boston, writes: "We are continually crowded for space, and so do not need verse, but we are glad to examine any sent in. The compensation is generally very small, ranging between \$1.50 and \$2, more if the poem is very unusual."

Mail addressed to *The Globe Trotter*, Philadelphia, is returned marked, "not found."

The Educational Screen, 5 S. Wabash Avenue, Chicago, does not pay for material.

Sports Afield, 1402 Pontiac Building, Chicago, Claude King, editor, is prone to long delays in accepting or rejecting contributions. In one case he has held a long article since November, 1924, after acknowledging receipt and promising to give a final report soon.

The Wholesale Grocer, Chicago, has absorbed *Wholesale Grocery Management*, Chicago.

The Young Churchman, 1801 Fond Du Lac Avenue, Milwaukee, Wis., Pearl H. Campbell, editor, writes: "The *Young Churchman* is not in need of anything and will not be for several months. It is a waste of time to submit anything but the best of material. Stories of more than 2500 words cannot be used."

The Independent, 9 Arlington Street, Boston, prefers articles upon political, social, economic, scientific and literary subjects. Some poems are desired and a small amount of fiction is printed, for the most part in the form of very short stories; 1500 to 2000 words in length.

The Presbyterian, 1217 Market Street, Philadelphia, Pa., writes a contributor: "We have only a small use for poems, and our files are now overcrowded with them."

Chicago Monthly Review is a new magazine at 723 Oakland Boulevard, Chicago. Thus far it has been rather slow in reporting. Rates of payment are not yet fixed, but are on publication. Maurice & Son, Chicago, publish the magazine.

Infantry Journal, Infantry Building, Washington, D. C., informs a contributor that it is interested in all aspects of the matter of national defense, including its broader lines, and that it is especially desirous of interesting Reserve and National Guard officers, who are professional writers, in submitting articles. Rates are rather low. Photographs are much used.

Travel, 79 W. Sixteenth Street, New York, informs a prospective contributor that it is not in the market for any poetry. *Travel* ordinarily does not use news stories. The magazine is looking for well-illustrated, unusual feature writeups of exceptional experiences or places. Photographs are demanded. Report is very prompt. Payment is understood to be about 1 cent a word on publication.

The Buyers' Yardgoods Review is a new quarterly magazine of the McCall Company, 236 W. Thirty-seventh Street, New York, devoted to the interests of buyers of dress goods and to the promotion of the sale of yardgoods for home sewing.

Reality, 17 W. Forty-second Street, New York, Dr. Harrison G. Dyar, editor, is not as yet paying cash for material, though accepting a variety of matter. This publication, philosophical and religious in aim, is a propagator of the Bahai doctrines, an Eastern cult.

College Humor, 1050 N. LaSalle Street, Chicago, H. N. Swanson, editor, writes: "We are going out after the very best writers and artists we can find and we try to be especially kind to young writers. Our editorial policy has been widened to include stories of youth. We want to insist that what we are looking for is, first of all, a story about young people; if it happens to have some college interest, so much the better. Nine times out of ten, when a good writer sits down to do a 'college novel' the result is about as appealing as high-grade sheep-dip."

Farm Topics, published by the Straus Brothers Co., Fort Wayne, Ind., "is not in the market for manuscripts of any kind," writes the editor, Myron R. Bone.

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8/25

The United States Civil Service Commission announces the following open competitive examination for assistant editors: "Receipt of applications for assistant editor will close August 29. The date for assembling of competitors will be stated on the admission cards sent applicants after the close of receipt of applications. The examination is to fill vacancies in the State Department and in the Coast and Geodetic Survey, Washington, D. C., and in positions requiring similar qualifications. The entrance salary for this position in the District of Columbia is \$2400 a year. Advancement in pay may be made without change in assignment up to \$3000 a year. Promotion to higher grades may be made in accordance with the civil service rules. The duties of the position in the State Department will be, under general supervision, to edit copy for publication, collate and revise translations from French, Spanish and German, and prepare indexes, footnotes, cross references, and bibliographical data. The duties of the position in the Coast and Geodetic Survey will be, under general supervision, to edit technical material for form, style, makeup, etc., and to prepare popular material based upon the investigations and field activities of the Bureau. Competitors will be rated on practical tests in editing, publications to be submitted to the examiner on the day of the examination, and education and experience. Full information and application blanks may be obtained from the United States Civil Service Commission, Washington, D. C., or the secretary of the board of U. S. civil-service examiners at the post-office or customhouse in any city."

John D. Long, from its inception managing editor of *Motor Camper & Tourist*, 53 Park Place, New York, in a communication to THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST, announces that he no longer has any connection with that publication and that he has never been responsible for its business management.

The Orleans Review, 2221 Calhoun Street, New Orleans, La., recently returned without explanation a quantity of material accepted from a contributor. The circumstances point to a suspension of the magazine.

Specialty Salesman, South Whitley, Ind., informs inquirers that it now demands articles of some length (having on hand an oversupply of short pieces) developed originally along specific lines. Generalities do not fit the requirements of this publication.

Light, Nela Park, Cleveland, Ohio, writes a correspondent: "Our magazine is devoted entirely to lighting—the art, business, and science of the activity." The book is gotten out by the National Lamp Works, a subsidiary of the General Electric Company.

The Household Guest, 141 W. Ohio Street, Chicago, writes: "We have a great deal of material on hand and are buying practically nothing from outside sources."

Tit-Bits, Box 382, Station A, Chattanooga, Tenn., according to a contributor, pays no attention to inquiries and during the past few months has not reported on manuscripts.

Better Farming, 141 W. Ohio Street, Chicago, pays a rather low rate for articles, recently paying \$5 for one of 1800 words, but on acceptance.

Kansas Legionaire, Wichita, Kans., is reported by a contributor as paying no attention to inquiries and failing to return scripts.

The Military Surgeon, Army Medical Museum and Library, Seventh and B Streets, S. W., Washington, D. C., the publication of the Association of Military Surgeons of the United States, is a technical paper, appearing monthly. It prints a great number of reviews of medical books, and it is interested in all matters medical. The editor is Colonel J. R. Kean, U. S. Army, Retired.

Successful Methods, a magazine of construction service, 1414 Centre Street, New York, Wm. Jabine, editorial director, is apparently a market for signed articles on such topics as a new highway, city boulevard, aqueduct, skyscraper or, in general, engineering feats here and abroad. Rates and methods of payment not at hand.

True-Story Magazine, Hutchinson & Co., 34 Paternoster Row, London, is apparently the British edition of the Macfadden Company's *True-Story Magazine*. While the editor, Miss G. Gilliglan, solicits manuscripts, it is understood that the British edition for the most part reprints story for story from the American *True-Story*.

Collier's, 250 Park Avenue, New York, rarely uses verse. "Not more than twice a year," according to a recent editorial communication.

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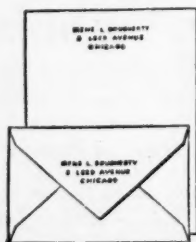
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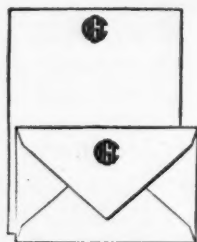
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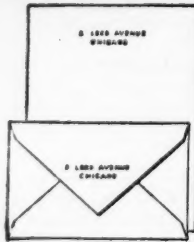
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Strength, 104 Fifth Avenue, New York, listed by editorial authority as paying 2 cents a word up on acceptance for material, is reported by a contributor to have paid for an article at slightly less than 1 cent a word on publication.

Radio Age, 500 N. Dearborn Street, Chicago, informs a contributor that it is its custom to pay for accepted material the 15th of the month following date of issue. Rates paid seem to be about 1 cent a word.

Farm and Home, Springfield, Mass., has been consolidated with *Farm Life*, Spencer, Ind., with the August issue, and will be published under the name of *Farm Life* at the latter address.

Letters addressed to the *Dominion Magazine*, King and Frederick Streets, Toronto, Canada, are returned with the postoffice notation, "Suspected to be fraudulent."

American Speech is a new magazine to be edited by Louise Pound of the University of Nebraska, and published in Baltimore, Md., beginning with a September issue.

The Musician, formerly at 2720 Grand Central Terminal, is now located at 901 Steinway Building, New York. Its editors report that it is overstocked.

Junior Home Magazine, 1018 S. Wabash Avenue, Chicago, Bertha M. Hamilton, managing editor, uses short-stories of juvenile interest, "how-to-make" household articles and the like, paying a low rate.

Wallace Farmer, Des Moines, Iowa, announces that it is well supplied with copy for the next few months, and cannot purchase any more special articles until next winter. It uses an occasional 25,000-word serial story. Rates are good and payment is shortly after acceptance.

Town and Country, New York, has been purchased from the Stuyvesant Company by William Randolph Hearst. It is stated that there will be no change in the policy or management. H. J. Whigham will continue as editor.

Better Farming, 149 W. Ohio Street, Chicago, F. L. Chapman, editor, pays about ¼ cent a word, on acceptance, for articles on farming, poultry raising, fruit growing, etc.

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